

**Testimony in SUPPORT of
HB 6617:
An Act to Promote Equity in Coverage for Fertility Healthcare**

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Vidya Puthenpura and I reside in Westport, CT. I am a physician working as a pediatric oncologist. These opinions are my own and not those of my employer, Yale University School of Medicine.

In addition to my role as a clinician, I am also a health services researcher whose work is focused on identifying and addressing inequities in outcomes and access to care for adolescents and young adults with cancer. I have seen firsthand the struggles our adolescents and young adults face with fertility preservation. I stand in support of HB 6617 because:

- It provides insurance coverage for medically necessary fertility preservation to patients with Medicaid insurance. This is a right that patients with private insurance already have and would **correct a significant inequity**.
- This bill provides our patients the assurance they need that this important medical procedure will continue to be covered by codifying the requirement to cover their care into law, rather than relying on administrative guidance.
- It provides guaranteed insurance coverage for the storage fee for retrieved eggs and sperm which is a critical part of fertility treatment.
- The bill provides that insurance coverage under the law cannot impose any limits based on an individual's use of donor sperm or embryos, further protecting LGBTQ+ patients who are growing their families.

Regarding § 1(a)(4), I recommend that the duration of time guaranteed for storage be expanded to until age 30 or **10 years after retrieval**, as this allows patients to follow physician-recommended timelines for attempting pregnancy following a cancer diagnosis. As the bill is currently written with only 5 years of storage guaranteed, patients may face the choice to follow their oncologist's recommendation or use their reproductive materials before storage funding runs out, which is not a choice patients should have to make.

I support HB 6617 and thank members of the committee for introducing this bill. I ask you to please support and pass this bill out of committee.

Thank you and please do not hesitate to contact me at the email address below if I can answer any questions or be helpful in any way.

Sincerely,
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